

# EXHIBIT A

DEAR JUDGE WHITE

MAY 1, 2023

I AM WRITING THIS LETTER ON BEHALF OF MY DAUGHTER, HEATHER HALWIG GHARIBIAN. SHE HAD A GOOD CHILDHOOD, STRONG FAMILY TIES, A DADDY'S GIRL, HER EDUCATION WAS TOP GRADE, EARNING A COLLEGE DEGREE AND BEYOND.

AFTER 40 YEARS OF A BLISSFUL MARRIAGE, MY HUSBAND, HER FATHER DIED BY SUICIDE, SHE FELT DEVASTATED, SUFFERING FEELINGS OF ABANDONMENT AND DESERTION,

A FEW YEARS LATER SHE MARRIED AND MOVED TO CALIFORNIA. THE MARRIAGE WAS DOOMED FROM THE START AS SHE DISCOVERED HER HUSBAND WAS SECRETLY SEEKING FEMALE ATTENTIONS ONLINE. DEVASTATED AGAIN SHE TRIED TO REPAIR THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH COUNSELLING, WHICH THE SPOUSE SAID "NO". ALIENATION OF FEELINGS WAS HARD FOR HEATHER TO BEAR. THE MARRIAGE ENDED IN A BITTER HATEFUL DIVORCE, AND SINCE THEN TO NOW, MY SECOND GRANDCHILD HAS BEEN RESTRICTED TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME, BECAUSE <sup>HER</sup> THE FATHER "DOES NOT LIKE ME" EMOTIONALLY, BROKEN, LOW SELF ESTEEM VALUABLE, MATT PELTON CAME INTO HER LIFE, HE WAS SHREWD, TAKING HIS TIME TO

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ACQUAINT HIMSELF TO MY DAUGHTER  
AND MY GRAND CHILDREN, TO TAKE ADVANTAGE  
EMOTIONALLY, AND FINANCIALLY. MATT  
CONTINUED TO WHITTLE HIS WAY INTO THE  
HEARTS OF MY DAUGHTER AND MY  
GRAND DAUGHTERS — EVIL THINKING. HE  
SAID FALSE PROMISES, SAID GRAND IDEAS  
THAT NEVER HAPPENED. HE KEPT COMING,  
INTO THEIR LIVES WITH LIES, HE DUPED  
AND DOPED MY DAUGHTER UNTIL SHE  
FELL UNDER HIS PERVERTED BEHAVIOR.

WHICH BRINGS US TO NOW/TODAY!

HEATHER'S TIME AT SANTA RITA JAIL, HAS  
BEEN POSITIVE BENEFICIAL RESTORATIVE,  
A CO-OPERATIVE FRIENDLY INMATE, AND  
EAGERLY ATTENDED ALL CLASSES/PROGRAMS  
OFFERED WITH SUCCESS. SHE HAS TOLD ME,  
WITH TEARS HOW SHE IS SORRY, VERY  
REMORSEFUL FOR HER BAD DECISIONS, BAD  
BEHAVIOR, IN OUR LETTERS AND PHONE CALLS,

MY FEELINGS HAVE BEEN RAGE, ANGER,  
DISBELIEF, SHAME, DISGUST, ACCEPTANCE.  
HEATHER IS INTELLIGENT, KIND HEARTED  
AND WANTED TO BE A GOOD MOTHER.  
WE BOTH WANT TO REBUILD MY FAMILY,  
THAT IS HEATHER, HER SISTER AND MY  
PRECIOUS TWO GRAND DAUGHTERS,

③

HEATHER AND I HAVE FOUND  
PEACE WITH EACH OTHER. MY  
MOTHERLY LOVE WILL NOT ALLOW  
ME TO ABANDON HER. I LOVE  
HER DEEPLY, SHE SLIPPED AND  
FELL, AND IS GOING FORWARD  
WITH HOPE. SHE DESERVES  
A SECOND CHANCE.  
I ASK FOR MERCY AND LENIENCY,  
WITH SINCERITY.

THANK YOU

Shirley O'Leary

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October 27, 2022

Judge White

*Re: Heather Gharibian - PFN # UMD984*

Dear Honorable Judge White:

My name is Tai Washington. I am 31 years old, a legal assistant at Simpson, Garrity, Innes, and Jacuzzi, and I am writing on behalf of Heather Gharibian, currently incarcerated at Santa Rita Jail, PFN # UMD984.

I am from Oakland, California, and my family moved to Texas in 2016 and returned to Oakland in 2018. When I returned, I was homeless and in an abusive marriage, so I moved with my grandparents to separate from my husband. I had to take care of my children alone and needed to find a job to support my family. It wasn't easy without a degree or skilled trade, so I interviewed and was offered a part-time position as a receptionist at an Employment Law firm where I met Heather Gharibian in 2019.

What began as a professional relationship also turned into mentorship and friendship. When I met Heather, I was unstable, broken, and lost. Working at the firm and being the only black woman there, Heather was the only one who did not discriminate against me due to my upbringing and education. Instead, she was kind, patient, and understanding and guided me through the job. When I made mistakes, Heather would never disparage me or act dismissively; instead, Heather sat down with me and taught me the ins-outs of Employment Law. Heather saw more in me than anyone has in a while, and she saw that I could be more than a receptionist for the law firm. Unfortunately, I was laid off during covid-19 March in March, and during that time, she suggested I save my money and go back to school to get my Paralegal Certificate. When business began opening, I was offered my position again as a full-time receptionist at the firm. At that time, I also started school, and Heather helped me learn how money management so I could pay to attend school and pay my bills. I also learned how to study while working since she had done this when she attended college.

Furthermore, Heather taught me how to provide for my children while going to work and school full-time. She helped me multitask my children's schoolwork and sports and even helped plan meals weekly. All of what she did helped me receive my Paralegal Certificate in February of 2022, and I was prompted to be a Legal Assistant.



Given the back story of our relationship, I knew of Matt Pelton, and I could see Heather's struggles with trying to break free from what everyone could see as a toxic, emotionally abusive, and controlling relationship. I wish I had known her drinking was out of control, and I wish I had the words and wisdom to tell her to leave, but I didn't. But I watched how excessively manipulating he was with her. Although she was taking all the steps necessary to break from him, for example, blocking his calls and emails and removing a tracking app he had on her phone, he would find a space in her fence (her heart) and come to the job or show up at her house to beg for her to take him back. The cycle began. It was so painful to witness him weaken a thriving family-orientated career woman.

I have had contact with Heather throughout the year she has been incarcerated at Santa Rita Jail, and I can say that she has applied herself in every way possible to learn and grow from her poor judgment in dating Matt Pelton. As my grandmother would say, she is book smart but not street smart, and going through this situation, I know she's learning and growing from dating and allowing a man to manipulate her. She loves her children the way I would see her interact with them at home and when she brings them to the office. Heather would get drawings and awards in the office and hang them up at her desk; she talked and showed pictures of all the kids' school events, their hair hairdos, and new books they were reading. She is and was a proud mother.

I know she is devastated she can no longer be involved in their life as a mother to them. That is why her arrest was so shocking because, if anything, she was passionate about her children; before, she never thought she could have children. Those kids were miracles to her. Ultimately, Heather has so much to offer. I believe she can positively impact the community with the wisdom and experience she gained from being incarcerated and her education. Her testimony can show other disadvantaged, abused, homeless women in the community before being incarnated or dead. She can help women like this by being on an ankle monitor or rehabilitation program. But I learned that being in jail can make a person who made a wrong decision into a monster. I see it all the time in my community men and women who were given jail time with no other alternatives to rehabilitation. Those people leave jail worse than when they came in. Even with Heather's record now, I know she will be a productive member of society with total conviction.

Best,

Tai Washington

Your Honor

I am writing this letter to let you know how remarkable Heather is. We have been in Santa Rita together since December of last year. And we have lived in the same pod together since Aug of this year. We have shared stories of our families, friends, and lives outside those Santa Rita walls. Heather lights up when she talks about her daughters. As a mother myself to a 16 year old girl, Heather and I have talked about the struggles we have experienced while being single mothers. And the heartache we feel by not being with our families right now. She keeps journals for her girls that she writes in almost everyday.

Despite all of the overwhelming feelings, Heather gets up everyday and exercises, goes to classes, and participates in the everyday life here. She is always positive and always willing to lend a helping hand. No matter how



small or how big. Whether it be an officer asking for help with dinner, or an inmate asking for advice.

Heather has helped me through some of my darkest times. She has talked me through my depression, cried with me, laughed with me, and made sure I didn't feel alone. Heather is an inspiration to everyone she meets. I believe that Heather can do so much more outside these Santa Rita walls.

I know first hand how prison can mentally destroy someone. And I believe that by sending Heather to prison would cause more damage to her life and her family's life, including her two daughters.

Thankyou,  
Michelle



9/20/22

To Whom it may Concern,

I am writing this letter on the behalf of Heather Gharibian. I have only known her for 1 year but its been a wonderful year getting to know her. She is very Caring, Compassionate, and understanding woman and she has 2 beautiful daughters that she loves more then anything in the world and want more then anything to be home with them being the mother that she has always been to them. Heather is currently going through a deep depression due to being away from her 2 daughters for 1 year. She is Praying and keeping Faith in God that things will work out in her best interest and she will soon be able to be home and a Family with her 2 daughters.

Jacqueline Wuttke  
Jacqueline Wuttke

9-18-22

To Whom it May Concern,

In writing on behalf of Heather Chapman my name is Jamie Crockett. I have not known her very long but the time that I've known her from our time of incarceration in Santa Rita Jail has really had a deep impact on me. There has been lots of times I've had suicide thoughts, thoughts of giving up, & feeling alone and she has been there for me. She lets me know you are beautiful person inside & out, gives me hugs, lets me know I'm important, that I'm loved, that there is life after all of this & that it gets better, gives me therapeutic talks & motivation speaking. She's a really compassionate person whenever anyone needs help & feeling down she's always there to uplift their spirits, help you find exercise & meditation techniques to better deal with anxiety & depression. Since her incarceration she's been a model citizen and role model she has worked as a Red worker for our housing unit also been a trainer to other new coming Red workers also has never had a disciplinary write up due to bad behavior or rude disrespectful attitude toward deputies. Being incarcerated can really be hard and take its toll on us as mothers. She has grown & stood strong throughout its opticals she has grown closer to God above and its word. She is taking classes to become a better her for herself and beautiful children whom she loves and cares about dearly & would give the world. I



feel God definitely brings people in your life  
for a reason. I must say I'm glad to have met a  
beautiful & wonderful person in her. We've definitely  
learned somethings from one another. Skip the  
limit & I see a bright future for her with many  
blessings to come and you can make that bright  
future happen for her. If you can find it in the  
kindness of your heart you can make that possible.



BJ4797



To whom this concerns Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> 2022  
My name is Margaret Wilson BNB887  
Friend of Heather.

Heather G. is a awesome person. She is a person that encourages you. She works well with others as she was a pod worker, she would make sure those with disabilities would be helping even if its with meal time or Pod time or getting authority help to help a Fellow Inmate. She talks about her future and her family. She is all on education we attend classes here we are advanced in our courses great study buddy. She needs opportunity to be with her family and I know and believe in another chance because not every person shows as much promise as Heather to be able to prove she can make a better future for her Self and Family. God Bless

If you like to here more from me  
Contact Heather and she will let me  
know.

@lmjg Wilson

Honorable Judge,

October 1, 2022

My name is Meikorn Bradley, I am 37 years old and I have been in jail on and off for the last 10 years. I am writing to you in regard to a defendant in one of your cases, Heather Gharibian.

Heather is genuinely nice and caring type of person. I have witnessed her help other inmates write grievances and medical forms, lend her colored pencils to inmates who wanted to do art for their kids but who couldn't afford colored pencils and watched her tutor inmates struggling with classes. Heather is also unconditionally generous with her commissary. She would put a candy bar or bag of chips in lunches of the indigent inmates and tell them that their name was drawn from the "Inmate Giving Fund". I asked her why didn't she tell them the truth and she said "I don't need recognition". "Seeing their smile is enough for me." This was a quality I had never seen before in someone that was incarcerated with me and I totally respect Heather for that.

We had the opportunity to have some long talks. I asked her if she was mad she could not fight her case on the OAS. She said "At first I was very upset about that, I really was. But now I

realize that I would have messed out on meeting some really great people, and being here forced me into sobriety - there is no more hiding behind a bottle. I've learned a lot about myself. I guess, in a way, I met myself in here. Being here has forced me to reflect on what a weak person I was turning into... I was the worst version of myself, wasn't thinking straight and made many bad choices. Now I have the chance to be the person I've always wanted to be, and when the time is right, to be the mother my kids deserve."

I can tell you that most people in denial - sleep that time away in jail. Heather always stays up after breakfast and begins her day. Podworking took up a lot of her time, but even after not being a podworker she still structures her day so that she is always learning and being productive. I asked her why she does this and she answered "I owe it to myself and I owe it to my children to make all this time count for something."

I know that talking about her children is a very painful subject for Heather because she misses them beyond what words can express. I know it was hard for her to listen to other



Inmates call their children everyday... It was also hard for her to stomach the inmates who never called their kids but could. It made Heather really happy to draw pictures for her girls or save articles they'd like. I don't think a night went by that she didn't cry herself to sleep quietly. She said that the pain is the only reminder that she was once a mother.

Heather is not a hardened criminal or a repeat offender. She let the wrong man in her life and he took full advantage of her. And she will pay for that for the rest of her life. One of our teachers once said "You are so much more than the worst thing you may have done." That is true of Heather. She is kind, giving, compassionate, humble and benevolent.

Not all people who stand before you deserve a prison sentence, far from it. you have the power to do one of two things: you could simply sentence her - and you could make her become another statistic in an already broken system, or, you can recognize she is someone different and use your power to actually help her by putting her in a program where she can get and work through the traumas

She has gone through. I know Heather has suffered being here and being separated from her children. I've seen her break down and cry when she thought nobody was looking. Her co-defendant put her through hell as has ruined her life. She has lost EVERYTHING. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Best regards,

Meikann Bradley-BFR498

Your Honour,

Sept. 24, 22

My name is Aledhea Jura Weyand Castillo and I am writing to you on behalf of Heather Ghazibian. I have been in and out of the penal system for approx 10+ yrs, and I have met all kinds of people along the way. I can honestly say that I have never met anyone like Heather Ghazibian, nor have I ever felt so strongly to write a letter on anyone's else's behalf. She may be just another defendant, or a case number to you, however to a lot of us who are incarcerated in Santa Rita Jail, she is so much more.

I met Heather when I came in April 2022. At that time, Heather ~~was the lead~~ pod worker. She approached me, introduced herself and then took the time to ask if I had any dietary restrictions. Not once in all the years I have been in and out has a pod worker or deputy cared enough to ask those kinds of questions or make sure my needs were met. On top of that, it took about a week or a half for my special diet to take effect with the kitchen staff. During that time



Heather made sure I had enough of the foods I needed so I wouldn't go hungry.

Further Heather went above and beyond her duties as a podworker and made sure we always had our hygiene supplies and clean laundry and bedding.

I witnessed Heather be compassionate, patient, understanding and non-judgmental, not just with me, but with others. I went through some low moments being hard on myself and feeling helpless about my circumstances. Heather always noticed and she helped me build confidence.

Her job as a podworker came to an abrupt end after about 6 months, through no fault of her own. It was due to a base wide change from the Captain regarding podworkers eligibility in connection with certain charges of disqualifying people from working. Heather was beyond devastated. Things that she took care of have gone down hill ever since. Many of the house deputies were in shock and some commented that she was the best podworker they ever worked with. One of the Sergeants even had a dis-

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cussion with her and offered to bring it to the Lieutenant level to get her reinstated. Your honor, I seen deputies and sergeants rally for an inmate. Believe me when I tell you this speaks volumes about Heather and her character and what she has and can offer.

She was moved into my pod and we lean on each other for support, it was during this time that I learned just how much pain Heather ~~suffers~~ suffers as a result of missing her daughters. She worries about them all of the time and writes to them and sends to her mother for safekeeping until they can have them. Heather also confided about her struggle with alcoholism and how much she was drinking in the last two years and I know she is filled with sadness and regret. Nobody can punish her more than she punishes herself everyday. Heather has never gotten in trouble or received a write up, which is rare in here. She doesn't sleep her days away and is always willing to participate in any kind of pro-

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programming, she continues to help inmates in need, whether it's as a shoulder to lean on or sharing her commissary if somebody is hungry. I am a pod worker now and that is because of her. She convinced me to go for it and during times I wanted to quit she talked me through it, and trained me from behind the gate as much as she could.

Your Honor, Heather doesn't belong in prison. I've seen a lot over the years and I've been through horrible situations and there are definitely people who deserve to be in prison, but not her.

Sincerely,

Alfreda Wayant  
AX4609



I know Heather Garibion from SRJ in 24 lower B Pool. She was very kind & easy to talk too. I thought she was definitely out of place being in Jail. When we introduced ourselves, she told me she used to be a paralegal which came in handy later when I had questions about court and legal matters. Everyone in our pool referred to Heather as the "mother hen" of the pool. She was loved by everyone and always respectful. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, I was reclassified to 21 east C pool. SRJ had classified me wrong. This is where Heather and I got reunited. One day, in May, I believe, a deputy was bringing a new inmate into our pool. My eyes opened the best but it sure looked like Heather. Honestly, even though it looked like her my thoughts were, "Ya Right Heather would never be over here!" I remember this day

so vividly. As she walks in the pool, all the inmates that knew her from previously being in 24 pool yelled excitedly "HEATHER!!" As I approached her, I saw her right eye was black & blue with a thick laceration right below her eye. Being that Heather is by no means violent or confrontational this was very shocking to see. Later I found out from her that it was because of her charges. Being in a 2 man cell can affect you mentally so I was concerned for Heather. I was also excited because I knew she would help us with the problems in our pod. Within Heather's first week with us, she ~~made~~ spoke up & got our water fountain, which had been broken fixed within just 2 days & also the mold in the showers brought to their attention. She was already making a big difference in our lives. It's the little things like

actual Hot water to us in here. I would always talk to Heather about my life, drama problems, advice etc. I believe she has a way with words, she always made me see the bigger picture or made me really question my decisions & in a good way. As time goes on and we got closer, I noticed Heather was ~~isolating~~ more than anyone in here does. I was always encouraging her to come out, then one day I could see something was making Heather distraught. I remember asking, "what's wrong?" Heather just hugged me and started crying. I remember Heather saying, "which if I told you what I'm in here for, you will hate me, and if you told anyone they could possibly one day attack me like the girl did in 24 pod." Heather didn't know, But I already knew what her charges were. I said, "I know it has to do with



your kids and your codependent"  
Although surprised she then  
opened up and filled in the blanks  
for me and shared her fears  
and what was troubling her.  
We had a long heart-to-  
heart. My thoughts were  
"HEATHER I CAN'T BELIEVE  
YOU EVEN DID THAT!! I CAN'T  
EVEN IMAGINE YOU BEING  
THAT PERSON!" "IT'S UNREAL!"  
She then explained what  
happened in 24 pod, the person  
assaulting her because of her  
charges." She couldn't hold  
back her emotions. She  
expressed how much she "hates  
herself and that she has to live  
with it for the rest of her  
life." Heather says, "I want  
my daughters to know im  
taking accountability for  
what I did," "Im not  
trying to get away with it,  
cause I can't I feel that  
guilt and shame everyday."  
Our conversation that day

is what im hoping for her. Every child deserves to have their mother in their life. Statistics speak for themselves with kids that grow up without parents or having incarcerated parents even. Both Heather & I have learned this in parenting classes. And im not going to lie; but im scared for Heather to go to prison, because she most likely will get assaulted again because of her charges. With Heather being older and having back problems its really worrisome. She shouldn't have to endure that pain on top of everything else. Heather is a great person. And im positive she was a amazing mother before misery allowed bad company. Prisons and jails say they are trying ~~rehabilitate~~ to rehabilitate inmates in hopes of them bettering themselves and doing amazing things with their life. Rehabilitating cars

only go so far behind these walls. Outside in the Real world is where people need it more. Bettering them on the inside, Getting educated about themselves and their behaviors. Learning how to make sure they make better decisions and most importantly how to learn to love & forgive themselves. Heather isn't a criminal. And there is no way she even remotely fits in at a prison. I believe with help Heather and her family can once again be reunited. Heather and her daughters are gonna need to learn how to heal their relationship. I just don't see any healing happening behind cement walls. I wish you could know the Heather that I know, not the Heather that is on paper with her only Real Crime ever committed in her entire life.



Heather is a beautiful soul,  
who I love her immensely &  
I pray Heather receives  
that second chance I received  
with my son. I pray for  
resources that will help Heather  
and her family. I pray for  
rehabilitation for Heather & her  
family and that God heals their  
pain and makes them stronger  
as a family. I believe Heather  
will be that inmate that giving  
that second chance, would make  
a great change to not only herself  
and family but to the world.  
I believe in her and I pray  
that whoever this letter  
reaches that you do too. And  
that possibly you can relate  
to the pain and misery of losing  
someone close to you and most  
importantly I hope you  
believe that are mistakes  
don't define us as a person.  
Instead, making us learn  
from them and thriving

to become a better person  
then what we were yesterday  
which is what I have witnessed  
Heather doing every day.

Thank you

Michelle Wagenseller

BIC071

BIC071 # Jail pen sorry #